

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCCT-01 MC-02 ACDA-07 AID-05 IGA-02 /070 W

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P 031120Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1414

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0929

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, ET, US

SUBJECT: DELIVERY OF F-5E AIRCRAFT; PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: STATE 080282

1. FROM OUR STANDPOINT, PRESS GUIDANCE PROPOSED REFTEL WOULD BE IMPROVED IF IT DID NOT REPEAT NOT CONFIRM PUBLICLY THAT ACTUAL SALES AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED LAST YEAR. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL (STATE 008422) THAT I WAS SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED TO SAY NOTHING TO VP BAGHIR LAST JANUARY ON F-5E TRANSACTION. PUBLIC CONFIRMATION THAT AGREEMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN SIGNED SEVERAL MONTHS PREVIOUSLY WOULD SEEM LIKELY DAMAGE OUR CREDIBILITY WITH SUDANESE, AT A TIME WHEN WE NEED THEIR HELP ON HOSTAGE ISSUE, WHEREAS REFERENCE TO AGREEMENT HAVING "BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION SINCE EARLY 1974" WOULD BE VAGUE AND LESS PROVOCATIVE.

2. I AM FRANKLY DISTURBED AT SUGGESTED GUIDANCE AS TO EFFECT AIRCRAFT DELIVERY MAY HAVE ON HOSTAGE ISSUE, AS
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THIS COULD WELL BE SERIOUS. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MIGHT BETTER SERVE OUR PURPOSES IF SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ARE
ASKED:

--QUESTION: WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS DELIVERY HAVE ON
CAPTURED AMERICANS IN ERITREA?

--ANSWER: A NUMBER OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES WHO WERE HELD IN ERITREA
HAVE ALREADY BEEN FREED IN THE LAST TWO YEARS DURING A PERIOD
WHEN OUR LONGSTANDING MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA
WAS CONTINUING. WE WOULD HOPE THE SAME HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS
WOULD CONTINUE TO GUIDE THOSE HOLDING THE REMAINING HOSTAGES.

--QUESTION: WAS NOT CESSATION OF US ASSISTANCE ONE CITED AS
A CONDITION FOR THE RELEASE OF THE MEN?

--ANSWER: INSURGENT SPOKESMEN ONCE CITED SUCH A CONDITION.
HOWEVER, THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POLICY OF THE USG WITH RESPECT TO
MAKING RELEASE OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES CONTINGENT UPON OTHER
ACTIONS BY OUR GOVERNMENT.
BREWER

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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